

# NOAA DIVE SAFETY AND PLANNING

The Dive Safety and Planning Pre-Dive and Post-Dive Checklists are to be completed by the assigned NOAA Divemaster prior to and following NOAA dive operations.

## PRE-DIVE CHECKLIST

### 1. Mission Safety

- ☐ Dive operations are planned in accordance with NOAA Diving Regulations.
- ☐ NOAA Divemaster, NOAA Unit Diving Supervisor or higher NOAA Diving Program authority has approved planned dive operations.
- ☐ A certified NOAA Divemaster is in charge of the diving operations.
- ☐ All divers are on active dive status with the NOAA Diving Program.
- ☐ Check monthly roster or contact UDS if in doubt about a diver's status.
- ☐ Conduct a pre-dive briefing.
- ☐ Dive mission, objectives and goals are defined, reviewed and understood by the dive team and support personnel.
- ☐ The Diving Accident Management Plan is posted, coordinated and reviewed (i.e., chamber availability, evacuation route, etc.), and all personnel are informed of their duties.

### 2. Evaluate and Prepare for Potential Hazards

- ☐ Identify dive, site entry procedures and exit access point(s).
- ☐ Define depth and bottom time limits for the planned dive.
- ☐ Define next deeper depth and next longer bottom time limits in case planned limits are exceeded.
- ☐ Evaluate and discuss potential for entrapment, entanglement, or other physical or mechanical hazards.
- ☐ Evaluate and discuss potential for bottom obstructions or dangerous bottom conditions.
- ☐ Evaluate and discuss potential for encountering dangerous marine life.
- ☐ Evaluate and discuss potential for contamination or exposure to pollution (i.e., petroleum products, biological or chemical hazards).
- ☐ Divers are outfitted in proper exposure equipment for environmental or other conditions.
- ☐ Evaluate and discuss surface and subsurface conditions and potential for strong current, low visibility, cold water, thermoclines, surge, swell, fog, etc.
- ☐ Evaluate and discuss local marine traffic hazards (notify vessel traffic systems about diving operations).
- ☐ Complete Dive Safe Ship Operations (NOAA Form 64-3), if applicable.
- ☐ Ensure that Material Safety Data Sheets (MSDS) are available and reviewed prior to use of any hazardous chemicals.

### 3. Diving and Support Personnel

- ☐ Ensure that all divers are authorized to perform tasks assigned according to their NOAA certification levels (i.e., Working Diver, Scientific Diver, Trainee Diver, or Observational Diver).
- ☐ Ensure that dive physicals are available for each diver in case of an emergency.
- ☐ Ensure that all divers are qualified, have received proper training and have appropriate experience, to complete assigned underwater tasks safely.
- ☐ Verify that all divers are physically and mentally fit to conduct the diving required.
- ☐ Ensure that all divers are properly hydrated and rested before the diving operations.
- ☐ Support personnel understand all diver hand signals, emergency recall signals and can offer immediate assistance in case of an emergency.
- ☐ Thoroughly evaluate repetitive dive designations if a previous dive was made within 12 hours.
- ☐ Brief the dive team and support personnel.

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## **PRE-DIVE CHECKLIST (continued)**

### **4. Equipment**

- ☐ Dive platform is stable, seaworthy and outfitted with appropriate safety equipment.
- ☐ All support equipment (i.e., boats, compressor, oxygen kit, underwater tools, etc.) is operated by trained and competent personnel.
- ☐ All tools used are appropriate for the task.
- ☐ All dive techniques to be used are safe and appropriate and authorized.
- ☐ All required dive gear is on-hand, inspected and found fully functional prior to the divers departing for the dive.
- ☐ All emergency and support equipment are available, inspected and found fully functional prior to commencing dive operations:
  - ☐ Drinking water is available.
  - ☐ Means of communication (i.e., cellular telephone, landline telephone, NAVSAT etc.).
  - ☐ Complete diving first aid kit, first aid handbook, oxygen resuscitator and backboard.
  - ☐ Divemaster kit on site, including a complete set of 1999 U.S. Navy Dive Tables, 1999 NOAA Nitrox Tables and other required dive tables.
- ☐ Rigid replicas of appropriate dive flags (sport and/or alpha) are prominently displayed during diving operations.

## **POST-DIVE CHECKLIST**

- ☐ Notify watch on the vessel's bridge when operations are completed.
- ☐ Strike the dive flags.
- ☐ Dive team buddies have remained together for a minimum of 30 minutes after each dive and have monitored each other's condition during that time.
- ☐ Recover and stow all support equipment.
- ☐ Ensure that all personal dive equipment and support equipment is thoroughly cleaned and properly stowed. Perform required preventative maintenance.
- ☐ Tag all damaged or malfunctioning equipment and remove from use.
- ☐ Refill all scuba cylinders.
- ☐ Log all dives and topside activities.
- ☐ If necessary, discuss procedures for flying after diving.
- ☐ Provide contact numbers for nearest chamber, UDS and Divemaster.
- ☐ Monitor divers for signs and symptoms of pressure-related illnesses or injuries for a minimum of 2 hours after each dive.
- ☐ Conduct a dive debrief and critique operations.
- ☐ File a final dive report.